

EASTERN SONGS

A

0
0
0
8
6
4
6
4
4
0



UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES





Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

EASTERN SONGS



TANCRED AND BIANDRADA.

EASTERN SONGS

BY

BEN KENDIM

William Blackwood & Sons
Edinburgh and London

1911



PR
6021
K299e

TO
MY MOTHER

861890

I HAVE to thank the Editors of the
'Spectator,' the 'Cornhill Magazine,'
and the 'Westminster Gazette,' for
their kind permission to reprint verses
which they have published from time
to time.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
A Ballad of Tancred and Biandrada. <i>Italy</i> . . .	1
Two Ways. <i>Malay</i> , 1903	5
The Insurgents' Song. <i>Serfidje</i> , 1904	6
Bismarck. <i>Italy</i> , 1906	10
The Impenitent. <i>Tetton, M.</i> , 1906	13
Ballad of King Henry. <i>Teversal</i>	14
Galahad (a New Version). <i>Red Sea</i> , 1903	16
Korea. <i>Japan</i> , 1903	18
The Holy Half-wit—The Scholar	20
The Crusader	25
Damascus Gate. <i>London</i> , 1908	26
Sardinian Song. <i>Sassari</i> , 1907	27
The Grand Vizier. <i>Ceylon</i>	29
The Albanian in the Yemen. <i>Constantinople</i>	30
The Book-Lover	34
The Mountaineer. <i>London</i> , 1907	36
The Saint in the Desert	38

The Monk. 1908	42
By Jeddah Town. <i>Sydney</i> , 1908	43
Success and Failure. <i>Melbourne</i> , 1908	47
The Lahz	48
Turkish Proverbs	50
E poi——. <i>Egypt</i> , 1908	51
Monte di Rosamarina	54
The Dreamer and the Armenian Fortune-Teller	55
Michael Angelo's Dawn. <i>Riyeka</i> , 1906	58
Grace before Sleep. <i>London</i> , 1909	60
A Song of Rivers. <i>London</i> , 1909	62
The Ballad Yvonne. <i>London</i> , 1909	67
Ahmed Ali on Woman's Suffrage. <i>Constantinople</i> , 1910	70
Semanghellina and the Mad-blooded Youth. <i>Seville</i> , 1910	74

POEMS.



A BALLAD OF TANCRED AND BIANDRADA.

To E.

THE wind was half asleep among the pine,
The moon rose trembling in a faint, red flame,
A drowsy fragrance filled the mountain vine,
When down the mountain Tancred came.

He strode through shadowy woods; gay in the
strength

Of life, he sought the violence of the sea,
And through the shadows his sword's naked length
Answered the moonlight's purity.

He felt a furious lust of mastery,
An eagerness to fight the foam and tide,
To strike the slumber from the sea, or die
In the possession of his bride.

She stole like holy incense from the wood,
To bring calm worship to the Virgin's shrine,
Intent on prayer, forgetful if she stood
Or knelt, to Mary of the Pine.

The tender stars were tangled in her hair,
The dewdrops fought for light about her feet,
She was so beautiful a man would swear
God's Mother walked to make night sweet.

She came a Queen, unconscious, unaware
Of all her wealth and weight of sovereignty,
Her kingdom but an innocence so rare
That all men paid it fealty.

She prayed for dead folks that she never knew,
Her prayers were like white arrows archers loose,
A flash of light ascending through the blue,
In the deep stillness of God's Truce.

The silver of the moonlight grew more dim,
His ears were deaf to the sea's wistful call,—
To watch one red leaf was enough for him,
A leaf her hair caught in its fall.

A child she knelt, where light and shadows wed,
He watched the reverence of her attitude,
The adoration of her bended head,
That was so fair against the wood.

She said, "Give men the peace my spirit shows,"
(Through moonlit peace her thoughts went up
to God ;)

She prayed, "Give me the peace that no man knows,
Your thought when first You made the rose,
Your miracle before repose,"—

Then to her side Prince Tancred trod.

Prince Tancred spoke, "Will you teach me to pray,
Interpret what I cannot understand,
God, answered by each woodland way,
The praise of His by sea and land?"
And "Yes," she said, and took his hand.

4 *A Ballad of Tancred and Biandrada.*

She gave him seven kisses, kisses sweet,

But only one, the first, in Mary's name.

She bowed her head. The dew that touched his
feet

Flashed in her hair in points of flame.

.

Once more she sought the Virgin of the Pine,

But where before she knelt, Biandrada lay.

She wept, "O where I lost it by your shrine,

Give back to me my power to pray."

TWO WAYS.

GOOD-BYE, my friend, our ways part here,
The dawn grows white, for us to start ;
We've travelled far, and without fear,
We never thought our ways would part.

The highroad was not made for me,
I want the woods where dawn lies wet.
Your goal lies onward, where you see ;
The forest hills hide mine as yet.

You thought my way would still be yours,
Straight as an arrow in its track ?
Good-bye again ; don't wait or pause ;
It's I who turn aside—or back.

Your steps ring on the causeway clear,
All men may see the road you pass.
You will not see my way, nor hear
My steps among the secret grass.

THE INSURGENTS' SONG.

YE who preach to us patience, how deep do ye
deem our wrong?

O rulers of Christian nations, have ye waited in
patience long?

Have ye prayed on the open hill, out under the
naked sky,

“God grant that the Kurd may kill, that our women
at home may die”?

Have ye mocked at the Sacred Name, for the sake
of another's life,

Nor flinched at the filthy shame, that sears like a
red-hot knife?

Have ye known what was past despair, as ye stooped
to a dying wife,

O ye who have said, “Forbear ; have done with your
wanton strife”?

We have watched how an old priest dies, from the
sickness that men call fear,
Blank dread in his tortured eyes, we have heard what
we would not hear ;
We have listened to children's cries ; seen when we
would be blind
Maids treated in shameful wise. We have waited,
we know our mind.

Have ye fled in the sickly dawn, before it was yet
too late,
With a child on your arm, new-born, leaving cripples
to find their fate ?
Our altars were foul with mud, when we came to the
homes we fled,
Smelt the reek of our kinsmen's blood, thanked God
that the dead were dead.

By the fires of our own homes, red, we have lifted
our hands to God,
We have sworn that we would not tread the way that
our fathers trod,

We have sworn to the gentle Christ for vengeance
alone to live,
For the sum of their guilt sufficed. Let God, if He
can, forgive.

O Lords who are strong and wise, shall we take what
our masters give?
Better die as a wild beast dies than live as the cattle
live.
Is there one of your words unbroken, your promise
of pleasant things?
Our innocent dead are token of the worth of the
words of kings.

Ye are girdled with safety, Preachers, ye know that
your lives are sure,
Ye would give us your wisdom, Teachers, and bid us
"Endure, endure,"
Ye never have hated night for the sake of those that
are dear,
Ye say, "Ye are mad with fright" by God, we have
met with fear.

Now listen to us, O Lords, to your "brethren" about
to die,

Have done with your oaths and words, or be damned
with your own damned lie,

For surely as Christ was slain, and surely as Christ
arose,

We have called on you, called in vain. Now we
fight to that end God knows.

B I S M A R C K.

In Memoriam.

(Cf. BUSCH.)

To R. A.

You planned a splendid Empire, fit to greet
As sister, the fair Monarchies that shone of old.
The kings who crouched, you scorned beneath your
feet,

To you men's cry for mercy was an idle bleat,—
You forged your Empire, shod with steel and
crowned in gold.

To you the misery of sword and flame,
The supplication of the women whose sons die,
Was half a jest. You made your iron name,
And gave your Empire life through roots of
treachery.

France felt the venom of your bitter hate,
You struck the mem'ry that was Austria to the mud,
And gallant Denmark groaned beneath your rod,
While in your heart you bade the English wait
To pay their toll of gold and agony of blood.

You planned superbly, like an architect
Who dedicates his soul to stone, to the stone's hurt.
You smirched your work, and left your Empire
wreck't,
Beneath the legacy of all your load of dirt.

By your vitality you fired a force,
Whose cunning conquered kings in devious subtle
ways,
You made a trick of marriage and divorce,
And when you touched them even lovely things grew
coarse,
Beneath the tyranny of your coarse phrase.

Years shall record your gift of cruel patience,
Blood, constant, drop by drop, anointed your grim
throne.
Your name stinks in the nostrils of the nations,
Your work stands sick with infamy, and stands alone.

You made your violent Empire, haughty, strong,
And in its way you trampled corn and wasted fruit,
Invoked great God to witness your worst wrong,
And gave your creature music, in the piteous song
That rose from conquered streets beneath the
Prussian boot.

Yours was the glory never to relent,
Till guiltless, humbled countries gratified your
mood,
The curses of the conquered made your life content,
In death receive your wreath of "Teuton" gratitude.

Pray then that you be utterly forgot,
You and your triumphs, mean bargains of your
trade,
Friendship a feint, your sacrament a plot,
Your lies the twins of oaths, your kiss before your
shot,
Creator of the people you betrayed.

THE IMPENITENT.

To M. H.

I WENT a pilgrim to a shrine,
But at the shrine I could not pray,
For, Heaven help me, on the way
I revelled in a foreign wine.

I trod a noonday path through trees,
Where leaves were cool and shadows deep
And calm as twilight on dim seas,
That fills the heart and soul with sleep.

I passed an inn, blue waves below,
Blue sky, a mountain's height above,
And there I saw the wine I love—
Red wine that the Italians grow.

Now much as I desire to pray
At that saint's grave where candles shine,
If once again I pass that way,
I'll revel in the foreign wine.

BALLAD OF KING HENRY.

To K. A.

DEAD is King Henry, dead of his pain,
Dead in his marble palace at Liege ;
He has fought with the Saxon, fought with the Dane,
Striven with France and conquered Lorraine,
Great in the battle, stiff in the siege,
But a mist from the hills stole out one night,
And darkened his eyes of their windy light.

Dead is King Henry, dead of his grief,
Tired was the Emperor, spent was the Conqueror,
Enemies had he, passing belief,
Son of his body, Duke of his fief,
Only the poor man, he was his follower,
Worshipped his Kaiser, died for his chief.

They have borne him away, his few cavaliers,
From Liege on to Aix, from Aix to Cologne,
His litter the shafts of sycamore spears,
A pine for his coffin, and poor men his peers,
Who followed the wind to conquer a throne,
But stars are the candles that burn round his head,
And the river he fought for shall make him a bed.

The Pope he would send his spirit to Hell,
And cast forth his body on to the wold,
But his warriors loved him, they loved him well,
They marched with him singing, from Rhine to
Moselle,
The poor folk followed, too many to tell,
They have covered his bier with red marigold,
And the Bishop of Liege has rung him a knell.

The Lord Pope sleeps in porphyry,
Wrapped in a golden sheet,
But the splendid soul of King Henry
Sits at Our Lady's feet.

G A L A H A D.

A NEW VERSION.

HER hair was brown, but dusted gold
Shone on it, by a young wind blown ;
It lived in light and seemed to hold
The sun or starshine for its own.

Her eyes were like Our Lady's, grey,
They ransomed light for other light,
They were a day-dream of the day,
The echo of a perfect night.

The beauty of her face compelled
All thought, all reason, everything,
Yet half withdrew and just withheld
The crown of its imagining.

Her step was like a soft leaf's fall
That wakes the sleeper in a wood.
It came, and when it went then all
Had gone from life that seemed most good.

One instant, for a moment's space,
She stood before him where he prayed ;
He felt her eyes, he felt her face,
The wind that touched her in the glade.

He left his prayer, forgot the place,
Forgot his vision of the Grail,
He saw her eyes, her hair, her face—
His hilt-cross struck the altar rail.

The music ceased like daylight spent—
He never cast one glance behind,
But followed on the way she went—
A hidden way, and hard to find.

K O R E A.

TO CYNTHIA.

BETWEEN two seas there lies a land I know,
A land of sand, high-breasted hills most dear
To listless winds and streams that hardly flow
So burdened with dead leaves for half the year,
A land of sand, too desolate for fear.

It is a place of grief, beyond belief,
With miseries too manifold to mourn.
Soft-feathered winds of spring bring no relief,
And summer gives no golden crown to corn,
A stricken place, whose face God keeps forlorn.

From winter till the autumn's creeping gold
Has flushed the forests, Memory is made
The King of all, a great Lord, sullen-souled,
He holds the mountain and the plain afraid,
A monstrous King whose kingdom has decayed.

There day gives way to day, as dream to dreams,
And men are intimate with death as sleep ;
White - robed they pray dead gods beside dead
streams,

By stagnant streams that wander to the deep ;
And still, by plain and hill half-shadows creep.

THE HOLY HALF-WIT—THE SCHOLAR.

(DUOLOGUE.)

To E. C.

WHICH is the way you travel, and do you travel far,
And is the light you follow the daylight or a star?
Oh, do you rise at morning, and when the sun sets,
 red,
Find rest in a green valley, and moss to make your
 bed?

I do not follow sun or star, nor any lights that wane,
My spirit knows her minister. I feel nor drought
 nor rain.

To tired feet no way is sweet; I journey past desire,
It is my goal to cleanse my soul in her white-kindled
 fire.

But on your weary marches have you no trusted
friend,

A comrade in the desert, to cheer you and defend,
With songs as clear as water, and a sword that's
keen and gay,

Against the scorching sands, or the tribes that bar
the way?

I travel east and travel west, and like a child at play,
I play with leaves when I take rest to wait what God
shall say.

There are no tribes to bid me halt ; my spirit leaves
behind

Dead weeds of passion that my fault has sown when
I was blind.

You wander past dim gardens, where lovely wild
flowers grow,

Where night that shuts the lilies comes with the
fireflies' glow ;

At dusk you pass by maidens with wreaths upon their
hair,

To seek a shadowy Majesty who heeds no shadow
prayer.

The budding leaves, the leaves that fade, dead leaves
the wind blows by,

By Him commanded, sun and shade, are God and
He is I.

For east or west the way I trod is south and north
the same—

The end and the beginning God, and God is not a
name.

There's pain in the beginning, our mother's pain at
birth ;

There's pain in losing, winning, till earth goes back
to earth.

Inshallah in the morning, when the dew is on the
grass,

We'll drink our wine together, let clouds and wisdom
pass.

I'll drink of wine with you, my friend, though
friendlier is my rill,

That rises at the rainbow's end, beside the daffodil.

I have no rule but the one thought that leads me on
the way,

The lesson that my soul was taught she ponders
night and day.

You tire your head with thinking where poplar
breezes blow,¹

Then let your thoughts like wild doves roost at the
afterglow.

You have not prayed at Meccah, do you keep
Ramadan?

Old man, you crave a saintship, your saintship's not
begun.

Yes, thou art right, for I delayed and squandered
what I had,

And though at many shrines I prayed my soul was
never glad.

But now the whole world is my shrine, I never ask
Him "why,"²

The beetle in the dust His sign, His sign the rain-
bow sky.

The meaning of the promise that you bestow on men
Is this, "Forego your pleasure, for God shall give
again,"

¹ *Kavak yelleri*, the poplar breezes blow in his head,—a Turkish synonym for madness or restlessness.

² *Bichun*. He of whom no reasons are inquired. One of the names of God.

You rise above our weakness and count yourself a
saint ;

I pray the wind of Heaven, blow sweet with this
world's taint.

A child that passed fell on the way. He said, "Wait
but a while,"

When comfort made the child as gay, he left him
with a smile,

The man had gone. He mused, "Words have but
little use. They fail.

Between the path I trod and tread, a loaf of bread,
Between the living and the dead, God knows, so
frail a veil,"

And took his staff, for he was lame.

THE CRUSADER.

Your face holds that which men might seek,
As great knights sought the Holy Grail,
With thoughts more pure than man may speak,
In deeds as splendid where men fail.

Your voice is like the sound of things
That every hillman knows and loves,
The wind on harps of many strings,
The pine-trees answer to the doves.

The revelation that you are
Is this and more than this to me,
The harbour lights, however far,
That lost men cry to on the sea.

DAMASCUS GATE.

To V.

SHE went to bargain in the city,
And passed a beggar by her gate,
And he was wretched, so from pity
She gave, because his need was great.

And this was like her, that she gave
In charity without a thought
A coin of gold, for "gold can save,"
(She said) "what gold has never bought."

The beggar followed where she went,
Forgot his hunger for a star,
And when at last, her money spent,
She could not buy in the bazaar,

He said, "Take back your gift, I pray,
Do me this honour, once my due."
She bought with it red silk, and grey,
And that was very like her, too.

SARDINIAN SONG.

TO ALATHEA.

TAKE my hand, and come with me,
And we will unlock the gate,
To the way of porphyry,
And the woods of pomegranate.
Take the key at break of day
(Hushed the dawn and cool the grass),
Calm anemonies the way,
And your eyes as calm as they,
White the way white feet shall pass.

You will give me keys to Heaven,
Rest in groves of pomegranate?
It's a weary way to Heaven,
And the doors are shut to hate.
There's a path that threads the pine,
Till it's faint, and spent, and lost ;
There's a sorrow that is mine,
By a Cross among the pine,
And it's I must pay its cost.

Sardinian Song.

White anemonies are still,
When the friendly fern-winds cease,
But I know a hidden hill
Standing in a deeper peace.
Once you knew that hill at least,
Cara mia Maddelena,
Tell your burden to the priest,
At confession turn you east,
Scorda tu la tua pena.

I have wanted, wanted rest,
But there comes the call I hear,
And I must fulfil my quest,
Oh, its end is very near.
For the way that I must tread
Ends among the whispering trees,
Where low litanies are said,
By the dying leaves and dead,
And no birds sing overhead,
Nor are there anemonies.

THE GRAND VIZIER.

To C. F. M.

AND I will be a Queen, said she, and you my Grand
Vizier,

And Uncle George shall rule my house, and John be
charioteer.

And he picked cowslips in the field, which she gave
back to him,

And they enjoyed the summer day until the day
grew dim.

And later as the years went by, she did become a
Queen,

But Uncle George said, "Thank you, no"; John's
grave had long been green.

The boy worked well as Grand Vizier, but not with
all his heart,

He thought "To pick her cowslips would be a
better part."

THE ALBANIAN IN THE YEMEN.

TO KIAZIM BEY.

Is there rest beneath a palm-tree and contentment
in its shade,
In the splendour of the desert, where high resolves
are made?
Level tracks of yellow marches where the sunrise
bids us start,
On to warfare in the morning, when a man must
play his part.

Camels know their place for kneeling, and the pigeon
knows her tree,
But the Yemen sands are burning, and the desert
winds hate me;
I shall have no rest from marching till the coolness
of the shade
Of the cypresses of Prisrend, when my debt of hate
is paid.

There are vultures in the Yemen, not the eagles of
my land,

There are red flowers in the Yemen, but at home
wild Lady's hand¹

Grows around my house at Prisrend where each year
the same storks nest ;

Oh to hear their wings a-clapping, when my friends
and I take rest !

Shall I come again at evening, to the valley of our
Drin,

See the afterglow through twilight where as white
as a girl's skin

Snow is shining on the mountains, and above the
snow a star,

Inshallah in the evening, but takdir tedbiri bozar ?²

I would give the rest of life before I reach the Calm
Abode³

But to see the mountain faces that the racing fire-
light showed,

¹ Lady's hand, Turkish name for honeysuckle.

² *Takdir tedbiri bozar*, God's decree breaks man's intention.

³ *Ikhtihali-dar-i-baka*, the Abode of Permanence.

And with friends to sit and finger the old pedlar's
wares, Ferhan,
Hear them call at dawn, and linger by the crimson
erghawan.¹

There behind the harem windows, lattice windows
that look blind,
Just beyond the swaying cypresses, I know what I
shall find,
Pertev endaz, nuri ainem, she whose voice is attar
sweet,²
And whose love is to my spirit as the rain is to the
wheat.

If I find my foe from Debra, and I never see her
face,
I have many friends in Prisrend, there'll be stones
to mark the place³

¹ *Erghawan*, Judas trees.

² *Pertev endaz*, &c., casting rays, darling of my soul.

³ When a man is killed because of *jak* (blood), in Albania,
they mark the place with white stones.

So my spirit shall find quiet, with my head below
white stones,
When the melting snow has roused the Drin till all
his water drones.

The white Drin and the black Drin, fierce brethren
of a feud,
They storm the savage winter, a gallant mountain
brood ;
But the challenge of their turmoil will be music dear
to me,
Who hate the tide of crawling sand and the sand-red
sea.

THE BOOK-LOVER.

You only love a light that's far,
You fix your eyes upon a star
And will not look where glowworms are,
Nor lamps that light men down the street.

You have, you think, a perfect creed,
Your gospel heals no wounds that bleed,
You look too high to care or heed
Whether you trample rose or weed
Beneath inexorable feet.

On earth you miss the best of all,
You do not hear the wild birds call,
Nor music of the waterfall,
And winds that are more musical
Than David's harp that soothed King Saul.

There is no Heaven where you fare,
Nor where you seek Him is God there,
But emptiness that is despair.

You pass your hope by in a dream,
And barter truth for things that seem ;
My paradise of wood and stream
Is nearer Heaven than you deem.

THE MOUNTAINEER.

I PAY my court in the open day,
A song and a laugh and a shining blade.
The hermit who hears me forgets to pray,
The sunburnt peasant throws down his spade,
The merchant of spices grows tired of trade,
When I am in love in the noon of May.

The envious anchorite marks my way,
The shepherd forgets that his sheep have strayed
Through the green of the vines to the olive's grey,
The trader curses his sordid trade,
Amber and rubies, Chinese jade—
“Better, far better his lot,” they say.

If love be in vain, I will take my sword,
No part of my joy will I leave behind,
But swimming the rivers I cannot ford,
I shall come to the hills that are always kind,
My hills I would seek, though my eyes were blind,
More dear to my feet than soft lawns abroad.

If love is not mine, there is this for me,
A cliff full of shadows where beech leaves fall,
The song of the wind on a sunlit sea,
The sound of the waves that are free, free, free,
While the evening star lights my festival.

THE SAINT IN THE DESERT.

(A DUOLOGUE.)

Is there certainty of Heaven, an abode for when
I die?

Man dare not be apostate beneath an evening sky;
I stretch my hand towards it, yet I fear to touch
the ark,

There is hope while twilight lingers, shall I find it
after dark?

The fly that's caged in amber, be sure she has a soul,
And nothing passes through the world, but pays
the world a toll.

I know the way to freedom; believe, distracted one,
The fly shall leave the amber when her prison days
are done.

Instruction is for morning, your philosophy is late,
Though evening's kin to daybreak, there is night
beyond the gate.

I have no time for lessons, and but little time to wait,
For written on my forehead is the burden of my fate.

The stars that shine above you are but sisters in
their light

To shadows of wild violet leaves that sheathe the
fireflies' flight.

For light and shadow had one birth, and light
shadow's twin ;

The robe of our humanity, O seeker, know, is sin.

The mirages of mystics, they are a subtle wine,
And food for that great holiness, which, desert saint,
is thine.

But I want real water, before night covers me,
No pledge of plenty by a far, intangible, pale sea.

As you may learn a language, forget it and recall,
As blinded men remember the autumn leaves red fall,

Look back, my friend, remember. Did you travel
once this way
With Solomon, the ancient king, who knew what
wild birds say?

I draw my sword on shadows, I know not where
to thrust,
In streams of clearest water, I taste the red grapes
must;
Your words of consolation are like the waves that
sigh,
A pleasant song for living men, no comfort when
they die.

Before you reach that point in time your spirit thinks
the end,
Know death and resurrection two faces of a friend,
Know each step indispensable towards the goal you
march,
The way you conquer, part of you, yourself the
sands that parch.

Ah, give me help to free myself from all entangling
thoughts,

O seneschal of keys that lead to cool and quiet
courts ;

My spirit burns her eagerness for rest I cannot reach,
As spray that fails to touch the flowers sinks seaward
on the beach.

THE MONK.

To B. L.

DELIGHT has got so many ways, I found her once
in wine,

In turbulent, hot-headed day, a-harvesting the vine ;
A mountain flower, a scented weed, she grows in low
and lofty places ;

I tasted all her bitter seed, and know how manifold
her grace is.

Now I have fought on many fields and travelled
many soils,

And seen that sometimes he who yields brings home
the better spoils.

Since I have bid good-bye to pleasure, monastic calm
shall now be mine,

And I will study at my leisure what joys there are,
apart from wine.

BY JEDDAH TOWN.

To L.

THERE were ten Arabs in the plain, who met him
with his guide ;

The sheikh of them rode forward then, to talk at
eventide.

He said, " The desert is a place where rarely strangers
thrive,

Give up your horse, give up your gun, and you'll go
home alive."

He answered to the Arab sheikh, " Peace on you
and your kin,

But I shall give my horse to-night to ostlers at the
inn.

My race is not a humble folk whom such as you
bid walk ;
Have you no powder with your ten that one comes
out to talk ? ”

And silence fell between the two. The Moslem
pulled his rein,
Then, “ Here’s the truth of El Hejaz, why should
brave men be slain ?
You have ten Beduw lances, four Beduw shots to
fear,”
But gaily laughed the Englishman, “ I have five
bullets here.”

“ It’s full a league to Jeddah town, the evening will
be done
Before you reach the tomb of Eve and the Turkish
garrison ;
Resign yourself to Allah’s will, and see to-morrow’s
sun,
And go in peace, you cannot fight, for we are ten
to one.”

They shot at him against the light, and twice they
missed him wide,

When swiftly up behind him came Mahmoud, his
desert guide.

He shot his guide, and still he had four bullets that
he stored,

And when his horse fell, wounded, three. He would
not use his sword.

They followed him as kites that mark a stag that
soon must die ;

Unflinching he held his way, his gallant head was
high.

Eleven fighters crossed the sand, their shadows grew
apace,

While ten of them were taught the truth about his
English race.

They had but one shot still to fire. The world was
very still,

And safety shone from Eve's white tomb, that shone
a tiny hill.

Their last shot failed, and he went on content that
he had won,
And glad to see the glory of the blood-red setting
sun.

The desert is a cruel place, where strangers rarely
thrive.
He shot his horse, he shot his guide, but he walked
home alive.

SUCCESS AND FAILURE.

SOMEWHAT above, beyond the others,
I strove to find a lordly place ;
They would not be the less my brothers
Because I conquered in the race,

I won myself a little crown,
Called to my friends, "Come, sit with me,"
But in the end myself went down,—
With them threw pebbles in the sea.

THE LAHZ.

HE helped me in the desert, for he carried half my
load,

And, singing in a foreign tongue, he strove to cheer
the road.

And though our converse was but short, I wished at
the day's end

The scanty best the desert gives to him who'd been
my friend.

And afterwards I passed the place, and found one,
desolate,

Belaboured by a Syrian, whose blows told of his hate.
I knew that Syrian captain, I knew and loathed him
well,

And took his weapon as I said, "Go with your kin
to Hell."

And he went down the winding road, amazed at
God's decree,

And left the sick man whom he beat to talk awhile
with me.

And it was he who cheered the way, when he had
power to sing ;

He had no power of singing now, nor strength for
wayfaring.

TURKISH PROVERBS.

Look not for help from friends in need,
Nor vaunt the courage of your steed,
Trust not the metal of his breed,
For so you are undone indeed.

Trust in your wife if she should swear,
As you would trust in streams to bear
The rings of gold that honour her.

Put confidence in sheep that stray,
In promises to bind a Bey,
Or if you choose in the Last Day,
And woe betide you when you pay.

E POI——.

To M. V.

THE wind is lazy on the sea, the ripple sleeps below
the vine ;

The world's a dream for you and me, a dream that
will not long be mine ;

But for this hour let us together find on the cliff a
sheltered place,

Where I can lie on thyme and heather, and hear you
speak and watch your face.

If one should come to you and say, "Bad is my life,
my fault is such,"—

Would you then turn your eyes away, refuse to him
your hand to touch ?

And if he told you of his grief for deeds of his, what
should he fear?

Would you help him with your belief, or say, "Good-
bye," my dear, my dear?

If one in need sought you, as I, not wanting right
nor seeking grace,
But still in love with the blue sky, yet more the
lover of your face,
What would your answer be to him, and would you
look at the bright sea,
Or where the shadows are so dim they hide your eyes
and thoughts from me?

The perfect days are very few, and rarely happiness
as near,
So I'm content to be with you, and watch your face,
my dear, my dear.
This dream is all that we shall share, I will not risk
my golden hour,
For once in life I will not dare, unless you bid who
have the power.

I find no comfort in a church, where priests remit
men's foolish sin.

Your gift is peace from restless search, peace for
your sake I would not win.

I'll ask no thing and nothing tell, but watch the
sunset with you here ;

We'll give the sun a friend's farewell, and then,
Good-night, my dear, my dear.

MONTE DI ROSAMARINA.

DREAMS have come to me and gone,—
Amber-coloured, sunlight-lit,
Rainbow thoughts that rested on
Star dust of the infinite.

Till the master dream on wings,
Touched my spirit made me wise,
Showed me workmen, sages, kings,
The Crusaders' odysseys.

Then I thought in doing things,
Shadow things, no wisdom lies,
Nor in work or wanderings,
But in watching summer skies.

Dreams will come to me and go,
(Clouds reflected in the sea)
And alone of all I know,
Hold my idle soul in fee.

THE DREAMER AND THE
ARMENIAN FORTUNE-TELLER.

SHE told his fortune by a well, among dark poplars
near the sea,

With incantation, charm, and spell at dusk she
practised sorcery.

Into her ear well water spoke, below the swift white
birds flew by,

Unhappy spirits of poor folk,—the Bosphorus was
their destiny.

Her face was veiled. She said, "Oh fool, your
constellation once was high ;

You were a leader born to rule, but now a straw the
stream drifts by.

For, foolish follower of fire, and soul in vain
endeavour spent,

You planned your Palace of Desire, and homeless
left your ragged tent.

And one you worshipped, you brought this, your
homage, frankincense, and myrrh,
When she had rather have your kiss than high
allegiance, worshipper.
A many things you leave behind, who pass in dreams
from star to star,
And miss the best beside you, blind. Illusion is
your tutelar.

Deep down the water tells your life, you'll walk a
way where slaves have ridden,
A mendicant you'll serve your wife, and sit forlorn
when guests are bidden.
Your covenant with ghosts of Spring is all too late
when Autumn's there,
O glorious beggar, sorry king, of the unanswered
prayer.

Then like an arrow evening shone, on its illumined
way to night,
Bright from its quiver, it was gone,—a lightning
darkness sheathed its light.

The poppies of the Golden Horn glowed red among
the asphodel ;

Her voice was mingled with the night and water
murmuring from the well.

He weighed the parables she said, how much he
wished, how much achieved ;

The poplars whispered overhead, and gave him
counsel, many-leaved

The afterglow just held the place, the sea grew
poplar-dark and pale.

He came to life, said, "Show your face," and when
she would not, snatched her veil.

The homage she desired he gave ; the young moon
saw, but she was dim,

They talked no more of king or slave—she left all
sorcery for him.

He gave his homage like a man, yet like a man his
tribute took.

She told his fortune in the well, and saw her own—
but would not look.

MICHAEL ANGELO'S DAWN.

To H. C. D.

YOUR eyes have penetrated to the naked end,
 Stared through the aching emptiness of space ;
In the inexorable years, was there no friend
 To bring some thought of gladness to your face ?

Did you find nothing in the hills and forests, fair,
 Nor flower, nor fern, nor cedar trees with shade,
And beauty but a mirage, mocking your despair,
 Long silence and shadows, your answer when you
 prayed ?

I would that I could read what made you sad and
 wise,
And robed in silence, why you change continually,
As changes come where even the great stillness lies,
 To those who watch, familiar with the sea.

I think as every generation passes by,
There are some souls that keep the cool of dawn,
Whose eyes on cloudy days reflect the clear blue sky,
Whose feet at noon still tread a frozen lawn.

The eagerness that once you surely had was spent
As seed on sand, as toil upon the sea,
Did God Whose thought was in the dawn He sent,
Send only that grey light to comfort thee?

Ascetic, splendid dreamer, was this the end of dreams
Faith lost, and hope that over-shot the mark,
Lost in the light of fickle mountain streams,
While tides were marching downward through the
dark?

GRACE BEFORE SLEEP.

To M.

OUR Lord was born in a poor place,
Where caravans of travellers lay,
But over Him the Virgin's face
Was like my dream of you to-day.

Was like my dream, when dawn was there,
And still with dawn the lingering night,
Unseen, but known in the sweet air,
Like bells that ring beyond the sight.

Our Lady Mary was not proud
Among poor folk at Bethlehem,
But great men waited in the crowd
For her kind look to fall on them.

The Syrian merchant paused to heed
The prayers of beggars by the gate ;
The Roman lord drew in his steed,
To let men pass of low estate.

Red rubies are not made from rust,
Yet misers threw their money down,
To buy an aureole from the dust,
And weave themselves an evening crown.

And some there were whose gains were made
In ways that honest men despise,
Who left their shameful carrion trade,
Because they saw the Virgin's eyes.

Let saints implore for worlds to be,
And young knights pray for deeds to do.
May Mary of her charity
Grant me to-night one dream of you.

A SONG OF RIVERS.

To M.

LIGHTS upon the yellow Tiber are too beautiful to
tell,
But the ancient poets praised them, and dead
emperors loved them well,
Dim cathedral lights at evening, flash from all the
hills of Rome.
He's a stately river, Tiber. There's a better stream
at home.

Fierce by vineyards and by castles, in a fury flows
the Rhine,
And he sets the blood a pulsing like a draught of
gallant wine.

Loud his roar through quiet cities. In a rage he
seeks the sea,
And the peasants mourn his plunder. There's a
finer stream for me.

Still the Douro makes a music that it made for
Moors in Spain,
Of the wind in highland valleys, and the wrath of
winter rain,
Music fit for knights in armour, when the valiant
trumpets call,
But I yearn to hear the murmur of an English
waterfall.

There's a torrent in Albania, where the faint red
garnets glow,
Through the feud of waters, like the ghosts of blood,
shed long ago.
Women wail by those sad waters for the sorrows that
are there,
And the oak-trees mourn for ever over drooping
maidenhair.

Oh, the moonlit Seine is silver, and I know not what
 she sings,
But her song is surely haunted by the sweep of white
 swans' wings.
Like a sword she cleaves the night, and carries
 memories to the sea,
Frosted gowns, and nobles courting, and a great
 king's revelry.

There are streams that are not waters. The Italian
 fishers know
How the dolphins thread with silver tracks the wist-
 ful afterglow,
Glades that cut a tangled forest, tides that sever seas
 asleep,—
Oh, it's loved they are by cavaliers and the sailors
 of the deep.

There's a pathway to the sunset, shines across a sea
 I love,
There's the Milky Way of Heaven that the angels
 ford above,

There's a pageant on the wheatfield when the
 shadows flung aside,
Morning lights a lane of poppies, in a narrow scarlet
 tide.

By old sluices, weirs, and channels, and deserted
 torrent ways,
By processions and their incense, like a scented
 summer haze,
By the lovely lakes of lilies, where the fairy wood-
 lands are,
By the light that rends the Heavens at the falling of
 a star,

By the Bosphorus and Jordan, by all Pagan streams
 and Frank,
By the dog-rose and the myrtle, and the wild-flowers
 on their bank,
By the Spring-song of the rivers when their life is
 treasured snow,
By the waterfalls of all the world, my stream's the
 best I know.

You shall one day see my river where the pines and
willows meet,
Find a shallow filled with sunlight, let it sparkle
round your feet ;
When I watch your face reflected in the stillness of
a pool,
I shall call my river still more dear, O you most
beautiful.

THE BALLAD YVONNE.

TO MAURICE.

AND so good-bye, my dear, she said. Go conquer
foreign lands ;

My soul shall be in your white sword, my heart is in
your hands.

My dear and gallant warrior, no tears shall dim my
eyes ;

Farewells should be in morning light, not under
rain-blue skies.

And this shall be my comfort, each night that you
are gone,

To sing the song that you love best, the Ballad of
Yvonne ;

And if perchance a harpstring breaks, no need of
news for me,

But oh the bitter silence then, till death shall set me
free.

He answered her : O dreamt-of girl, I do not yearn
to fight ;

I long to lie on lilies, here, and watch the herons'
flight.

I would not conquer one small star, while Earth has
such a store,

Of moss for weary soldiers, and flowers to make a
floor.

At ease we'll watch the herons fly, until the day is
done,

And you shall sing me, on your harp, the Ballad of
Yvonne ;

But if again I crave for fight, or love another maid,
That is the way of men-at-arms, who serve a fickle
trade.

Fat monks have got an easy life, rich men can lie
a-bed,

But my long sword is my highway, and love turns
steel to lead.

So I will love you, maid of dreams, until the sun
goes down,

Then put a helmet on my head,—you take my rose-
leaf crown.

She said : The Ballad of Yvonne is known in every
land ;
Who ever helped a beggar, or kissed a poor girl's
hand,
Who prays to Mary at the Dawn, who dreams of
Galilee,
He hears the song some few can sing, from bird and
stream and sea.

So go your way, my guest last night, you miss the
sweetest tune ;
Men pause in Rome to hear it, and beneath the
Syrian moon,
It lies in lovers' greetings, and the clash of sword
and spear,—
A music fit for gentlemen, not mercenaries, to hear.

There are Italian Cavaliers, who conquer when they
kneel,
Whose spirit is a sword more fine than your Toledo
steel.
You are not hawk to heron, nor the mountain
eagles' game,
So go your way, paid man-at-arms, the twilit way
you came.

AHMED ALI
ON WOMAN'S SUFFRAGE.

Ahmed Ali happened to be travelling at the time of the Declaration of the Constitution, which he ostentatiously applauded. His enthusiasm was less five months later, when he returned to find a distinctly altered household.

THERE'S purpose in the marching of a man who
comes and goes,
There's meaning and God's vigour in the melting
of the snows,
But Women tread a way that leads where only
Allah knows.

When seaweed binds a storm at sea, when spiders
break the oak,
When architects can make a mosque of rainbow,
night and smoke,
In those dear distant days a man will rule his women-
folk.

Earth has no corner-stone for them, they put the
world on edge ;
They pave Life's way with prickly things, the cactus
is their hedge ;
And what they love to honour most, they love still
more to pledge.

Once I was Lord of Caravans. I took my ease in
state,
A-drinking sherbet by a stream, with pretty girls
to wait,
Who brought me grapes of Trebizond, and seeds
of pomegranate.

My eunuchs kept my palace-door : the peace of my
Serai
Was like calm Judas-trees at night, beneath a wind-
less sky :
No Pasha in all Turkey had such quiet hours as I.

I find no consolation in my marching caravans ;
More restful far than my own house are Anatolian
khans,
Where every couch has fifty fleas, but all the fleas
are man's.

My palace is unquiet, for my women seek to find
A magic box of mastery to teach all men their mind,
Beyond the wish of God to grant, or husbands who
are kind.

A voice comes out from this machine of paper, string,
and wood ;

The vote of damsels that desire the claims our sires
withstood.

Weak women wailing for a sword to man their
womanhood.

It is a cursèd new device, no good for Peace or War ;
No saint has ever craved it nor one astronomer ;
And though it's sold in Frankish towns, 'tis not in
this bazaar.

They say this Toy's an amulet for measles and
divorce,

And it can govern mighty Fate, as reins a frantic
horse ;

Once more I'll give them sweets, and then God's
law (that is, man's force).

.

There's sunset on the Bosphorus, the Conqueror's
golden stream,
And all the peace of Paradise in gardens where I
dream,
And peace as deep as the deep sea inside my cool
Harim.

When toys alone make women glad, then songs shall
mortar bricks.
My Harim is united by the tune of falling sticks.
God gave to man His strength (to use), to women
gave He tricks.

.

There's things that are a pity : some actions are a
sin,
But Turks were born to soldiering, and soldiers have
to win ;
Before you conquer men, My Friends, first rule your
women kin !

SEMANGHELLINA AND THE
MAD-BLOODED YOUTH.

To G. A. L.

"HERE is a gallant horse for sale, clean pastern,
flowing mane ;

His dam was of the Arab breed, his sire was bred
in Spain.

This horse was surely foaled to bear the Sultan's
Grand Vizier,

His master is a reverend man" (so cried the
auctioneer) ;

"Three hundred pounds is all the price we ask a
mountaineer."

Then forward sprang a wild young man ; mad
mountain blood had he :

"I boast an ancient lineage, a goodly guarantee ;

Five times a-day I say my prayers; I fast at
Ramadan :

I have no gold, but much I'll win for you in
Serbistan,

If you will trust the honour of a hill-bred fighting
man."

That wise old merchant pondered, as he stroked his
beard of white ;

He loved all subtle bargaining, at dawn, at noon,
at night.

"If thou wilt swear to give to me all gain you get
abroad,

A blessing on thy wildness and strength to thy long
sword ;

Then mount the horse in Allah's name, and ride him
as his Lord."

The mad-blood youth rode out to raid the realm of
Serbistan ;

He halted not for brigands, and he tarried at no
khan ;

76 *Semanghellina and the Mad-Blooded Youth.*

There was no torrent of the hills, that wrecks a
caravan,
Nor any wrath of waters that one-half as fiercely
ran,
As the blood that urged the wildness of that wild
young man.

The King was on his balcony, about him stood his
kin;
The courtiers all fell silent, as the youth rode to the
inn.
He called a Servian ostler, "Fetch me fodder for my
steed,
Fetch water to refresh him, and the best corn for
his feed."
"Oh, hasten thou," a herald cried. "Of thee the
King hath need."

He fed his horse and said his prayers, then hied
him to the King:
He gave him low obeisance, but shrewd, hard
bargaining.

“Nine hundred pounds my horse’s price. My Lord,
he hath no peer.”

The Elders spoke together long: “O Lord our
King, give ear;

We dare not tax the people thus—this stallion’s
price is dear.”

An ancient greybeard planned a plot (he sought a
courtier’s place):

“We’ll trap him with our cunning, and entice him
with a face;

Now listen, gentle Majesty, praise God for this wise
plan:

Let girls with roses in their hair attend at the
maidan,

And love will fight our battle with this wild young
hill-bred man.”

And so upon the morrow stood the men of high
estate,

Where lovely girls were brought like doves beyond
the palace gate.

The youth rode out from arches where the light was
faint and dim,
And though he loved no maid of them, their hearts
went out to him ;
For horse and man were fine to see—high courage,
splendid limb.

Dawn rode no lighter on the winds than he upon
his horse ;
No sweat was on his stallion's neck when he reined
in his course.
The angry Elders cursed aloud that greybeard and
his creed.
The ancient rascal answered them, "One girl can
help indeed :
You have forgot the King's own child ; she shall
obtain the steed.

"Semanghellina's beauty is beyond the stars and
sun ;
If he but see and speak to her, his valour is
undone.

The racing steeds are good for those who charge
upon the foe ;

It's mules that carry merchandise, more swift than
chargers go.

And though your blades be sharp, my Lords, by
God your wits are slow."

The youth rode from dark portals with the sunshine
on his face,

Upon a steed that touched the ground as wild deer
in the chase.

Around the maidan once he went, swift as a wild
bird flies,

And twice he went, but then he saw Semanghellina's
eyes.

He reined his steed, and saw nought else beneath
the noonday's skies.

The Princess came to his salute ; she stroked his
horse's mane

(That ancient greybeard prophesied, "My scheme
will not be vain").

The youth spoke of his contract ; then, " O Lady,
come with me ;
There's nought can overtake my horse from Belgrade
to the sea,
And leave your father's house, my soul, to learn
what love can be."

She answered him, " O my two eyes ! O splendid
to behold !
Within the palace of my sire I have a cup of
gold ;
I have a woven cloak of gold, the pockets in it
nine,
And many liras each contains that shall be yours
and mine.
Now listen to my counselling. Make thou no hasty
sign."

She said, " The noontide sun is strong and in his
fiercest mood,
His strength hath come in a good hour to madden
thy wild blood ;

Now cry aloud for water, and it's I will serve thy
need."

The youth swayed in the saddle, and, "I faint upon
my steed ;

Oh, bring a cup to quench my thirst, and God reward
the deed."

She came to him all dressed in gold across the
noonday sand ;

He swung her to the saddle with the gold cup in
her hand.

Oh, loud the outcry in Belgrade. No steed that
had a lord

Stood idle in the stables then ; each sheath gave up
its sword ;

But he had left them all behind before he reached
the ford.

Then fell upon that greybeard knave the angry
nobles' blows,

While through the summer they rode on to high
Albanian snows.

The summer was their comrade, and God's mercy in
the showers,
They crossed clear streams of water, and they lay on
banks of flowers ;
Between the two his bare sword gleamed throughout
the midnight hours.

They rested on a lawn of green, when suddenly he
cried,
"A curse on empty journeys, and a curse upon this
ride ;
O Allah, give him trouble, the steed that I bestride."
The maiden answered, "O my soul ! Whatever else
betide,
Your sword is safe beside you and your love is by
your side,
A proper pair to cheer a man and fill a chief with
pride."

He answered her, "In Ipek, where the mountain
clansmen are,
An ancient merchant bargains in the gloom of the
bazaar ;

He ponders on my coming and forecasts the wealth
I bring :

I bear a golden tribute and the daughter of a
King.

I may not tarry longer, dear, to hear the wild bird
sing."

Semanghellina made reply, "I was not won by
force ;

With my whole heart I came to you to mount your
gallant horse.

The woods are full of music, see the lovely glades
of green.

Forget your idle promises, and what those wild
words mean :

For you shall lead a warrior band, and I will be your
Queen."

He said, "My coral rosary has ninety-nine red
beads,

The names of the All-Merciful, where each a wound
that bleeds ;

And I could staunch the hurt of them by treachery
and lie,
By Allah and His Prophet and the Saints that
testify,
I would not be an infidel ; a Moslem I would die."

They travelled swiftly through the hills ; at night the
moon was strong.
They paused no more by rivers, nor to hear the wild
birds' song.
At last they came to Ipek town, beneath the evening
star,
And found the merchant where he sat outside the
old bazaar :
" It's fast we've come," the wild youth said ; " it's fast
we've come and far."

" Now hear the tale I have to tell, O Master of the
Horse :
I've robbed a King and country, and I conquered
fraud by force.

By Allah who is merciful to all of the true creed,
By Him, the great Disposer, I have been true
indeed ;
So if thou judge me faithful, Lord, then grant my
work its meed.

“There’s sorrow in the Palace, they mourn in
Serbistan
The gains that I have got you and the glory of my
clan ;
The King grieves for his daughter and the wrecking
of a plan,
A scheme of guile and cunning that an ancient
wretch began,
To steal away the wisdom of a young mad-blooded
man.

“Here is a cup of gold I bring and plenteous golden
store,
And such a gold-embroidered coat was never seen
before ;

The work is of the Moorish kind, from Jerez or
Xenil,

The garment bears the name of God. Your horse
waits for your will,

To ride to Prisrend in the plain or Dibra on the
hill.

“And last of all, Effendiler, a maid I bring to you,
A very flower of loveliness that keeps dawn’s freshest
dew ;

She has a Christian King to sire, so she is yashmak
free.

My soul yearns for her beauty as the Greeks desire
the sea.

Then reckon out our contract now ; God’s grace
abide with thee.”

That ancient merchant thought awhile, a-fingering
his beads :

“I sing the praise of Allah’s name ; may He requite
thy deeds.

Mad-blooded one, you take no thought like pilgrims
when they start,

But Allah loves a generous man, He loves a generous
heart.

Oh, warm my welcome home, my son, to whom I
bade depart.

“ Mine is the cloak and half its wealth ; I’ll take the
cup of gold ;

The horse is thine and half the wealth ; the girl is
yours to hold.

My life has lain in bargaining ; I know the subtle
phrase

That makes the maidens buy my silk, that wins the
women’s praise.

God does not care for twining paths ; go on in your
straight ways.”

PRINTED BY WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS.

THE LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



A 000 864 644 0

PR
6021
K299e

